



Minutes for Tuesday, May 7, 2024

Normal Heights Community Center/Zoom
4649 Hawley Avenue

Attendees:

X = in attendance

X	Paul Coogan (C)	X	Jim Baross	X	Scott Kessler (AABA)
X	Allan Harjala (VC)	X	Dan Soderberg	X	Emilie Colwell
X	Sami Burrows (S)	X	Greg Stone	X	Jacob Koopman
X	Frances Prichett (T)	X	Nancy Lawler		

Paul called the meeting to order 6:02 and read the opening reflection.

Board members introduced themselves and shared their favorite pizza topping.

Community Attendees

8 zoom participants, 12 physical

[Signed in virtual participants: Brian Adams, Bonnie Bekken, Ramie Zomisky]

[Signed in physical participants: Nick Silva, Terry Hoskins, Art Harrison, Paul Jamason, Norma Stafford]

New Monument Update

New monument identifiers have been added to El Cajon Blvd bridge; NH on northwest corner.

Approval of previous meeting minutes

Emilie asked that her name be spelled correctly.

Paul motioned. Frances seconded.

Unanimous approval.

Treasurer's Report

Frances reported no change. Balance of \$332.46

Non-Agenda Public Comment

- Resident update request: Ward Canyon - CalTrans update on piece of 40th street up for grabs & Community Garden install support
- Jeremy Richardson - CalTrans concerns (noise pollution, dust from stage, healthy/safety concerns with debris) advocating for decision to be made on the space. Pro community garden
- Sara Al-Algha from District 9 updated she is in communication/on an email thread regarding community garden
- Arthur Harrison: Commented on submission of floor clean request to the rec center. Paul advised he would let the community center know.

Overview of Agenda and Minutes Cycle Review

Paul reviewed the process for agenda and minute cycles.

Arthur Harrison asked who advised this complies with Brown Act. Paul advised Natalie Koski-Karell as our planning department representative, and also Marlon Pangilinan.

RPJ-1113452 Benton Place presented by Luis Espinoza

Luis Espinoza, Architect and future inhabitant of Benton Place Residence, presented the design, 3D model and floor plans for the space. Proposing one-story 1680 sq ft single dwelling unit main residence and detached two-story structure to include (2) 520 sq ft ADU and detached one-story 480 sq ft office/storage space. Two-phase project: 1st - single dwelling residence and parking surface; 2nd - two remaining structures (ADUs and detached one-story 480 sq foot office/storage). Total 4 parking spaces. Goal is to honor the canyon, land and maintain the integrity of the lot.

Paul passed along a physical copy of the plan for community civilians to review.

Questions/Comments:

- Scott Kessler asked if there were any actions to vote on; Paul advised no actions were planned and opened the floor to the board and audience.
- Scott Kessler, Jim Baross welcomed the neighborhood and Jim Baross advised double-paned windows for traffic sound.
- Frances Prichett clarified whether one tree would be removed (confirmed) and how tall ADUs once finished (12.5 ft), only 1 ADU will be affordable - rent TBD as part of phase 2. Frances advised people are losing insurance due to fires so commended Luis on considerations.
- Emilie Colwell: biology study and what type of habitat was found/any mitigation? What review cycle? Luis: No mitigation, mostly fill - no endangered species, plants. In first review cycle, comments expected in upcoming weeks.
- Jacob Koopman: minor red flags about canyon view obstruction/disturbance with Luis owning one; Luis confirmed only one tree or a few branches, and relocating a tree. Planning to plant 3 fruit trees in addition.
- Caroline: future next door neighbor, so excited and delighted to have him as a neighbor. Tree is enormous eucalyptus if it falls will crash and ruin home.
- Pete Stafford: Property to the north, lived there entirely life and advising it will not interfere with the canyon. Pete clarified to Jacob that lot cannot be

Paul advised we should make a motion to send a letter to support the project; there were concerns from Jacob having not enough information for a decision.

Paul modified to table the vote to offer a letter of support to the city as it is a discretionary project for the next meeting.

General Plan Refresh Blueprint SD

Paul shared the latest General Plan updates and elements. Advised Normal Heights most interested in recreation, historic preservation and economic prosperity. Some highlights: curb management for shared use, pedestrian oriented design to break up superblocks, water reclamation. Shared the latest timeline and encouraged to share and advised any additional questions can be sent directly bluesprints@sanidieg.gov.

Goals for New Cycle

Greg Stone shared update on smaller meeting regarding Goals with community and board members and then handed over to Jacob, who shared five primary category goals: improvement of infrastructure, public safety, enhancement of community spaces, community engagement & outreach, financing & fundraising. Greg emphasized the importance of new membership and community engagement as a focus.

Paul advised to create a formalized list and create the subcommittees for upcoming year at the next meeting.

Review of committees and membership

Paul advised we will do this at the next meeting.

Elected Representatives

Sara Al-Agha from District 9 Councilmember Sean Elo-Rivera's office

Ward Canyon park - no update on community garden. Mock building is being monitored and boarded up, still plan to tear-down early Summer 2024. If any graffiti or trash, can reach out directly to Sara via email. Encouraged everyone to let Sara know of any issues so she can raise to the appropriate departments and help push for updates.

City is going into a budget deficit - do not have funds for repaving. Paving assessment management plans are how determinations are made and done via transportation department. Sara will send to Paul to forward along to board and provide fact sheet about repaving and cost.

Budget season in progress - two upcoming District 9 forums, 5/7 11 AM Park De La Cruz Spanish; 5/16 6PM English Virtual and taking requests for translations.

Hiring new Chief of Police, interview process in progress.

- Scott raised concerns about three dead trees at Adams Park and more dead trees at Ward Cyn that were killed by Park & Rec staff's bad trim job. Should be replaced, been over a year.
- Nancy reported on get it done app but have not been addressed; Sara can elevate to appropriate department.
- Frances brought up 5 trees cut down in neighborhood, and none have been replaced. Street paving still not being addressed, particularly Hawley, Mtn View. Sara has spoken about how the city does not have budget for repaving, but can elevate any repairs.
- Paul Jameson gave comment on Regional housing 108k by 2029, state requirement.

Kate Needham-Cano from Congresswomen Sara Jacobs' office

House is back in session, votes are going in on various bills. The Congresswoman will be supporting the Child Care Stabilization Act. She did praise the House Arm Service Committees, military quality of life, panel report of recommendations, particularly improving service members pay child care, access, housing, healthcare and spousal support.

She also urged Congress to take action and pass her drug Shortage Prevention Act, which is preventing and minimizing drug shortages across the country, particularly access for child drugs, such as child Tylenol and Moulton.

She sat on the panel for the San Diego Regional Chamber of Congress luncheon with the rest of the San Diego Congressional delegation, and answered lots of pressing questions that they and the panel as well as audience had for her and the rest of the delegation

Office is always available by appointment only, can find via website sarajacobs.house.gov, email or phone. 619-280-5353

Chair report

Ad hoc subcommittee to county grand jury to open investigations into DSD and Planning Department terms of overstepping. All material is available online via <https://normalheightscpg.org/grandjury>. Will go to vote at CPC, next meeting at end of May, if approved, submitted to grand jury in June.

Adams Avenue Business Association

Scott Kessler - thanked streets division for repairing 15 of acorn lights on Adams Ave. 120 decorative of Adams Ave. 24 original, rest are fake antique Property owners pay for the additional lighting.

Successful Adams Avenue Unplugged event.

Replaced 33 diseased pear trees in Kensington with new trees.

May 18th - new program called Alleys in Action, to propose better use of our alley ways.

Taste of Adams June 30th from 11-3PM.

AABA held annual board retreat this morning.

Next AABA mixer is May 21st, 5-7PM at bica.

Adams Street Fair September 21-22nd.

2nd business closure suggested due to installation of bike lane on 30th street, was met with negative community reviews due to bike lane opposition.

Highest grossing business down 30% because of parking and delivery issues. Hope that city takes better needs of the commercial properties.

El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association

Gary Weber - provided background on where the new Normal Heights monument came from and the bridges labeled Pontavacio Bridge. Encouraged everyone to look at that area for future planning. Still work to be done like connecting transit line with green line at bottom of hill. View southern border of Mid City as housing opportunity of the future.

NH Community Association & NH Urban Arts

Greg – The association has a mixer next Thursday May 16th at Ould Sod. More events to be announced over the summer time.

Adams Community Recreation Advisory Group

Nancy – No meeting this past month. Encouraged community to attend 4th Tuesday at 6PM.

Normal Heights for Smart Growth Poll

Paul informed a spring cleaning to enter Get It Done reports and will involve a cash prize/gift certificates for person who submits the most Get It Done requests. Encouraged to submit requests so Sara can bring to GID tickets to the city.

Mid City Community Plan Update Joint Committee

Emilie is our group's designee in the city working group. Kick off meeting help to establish timelines, what a community plan is, what to expect. Updated One Mid City Group (previously two), represents all neighborhoods within mid-city. Multiyear process, goal approval February 2026. Group will be meeting quarterly.

In-person Workshop: Hoover high school Saturday May 18th 11AM-3PM

Virtual Workshop: Wednesday, May 22nd 6PM - Zoom link on City Community Planning Website

Historic Review

Dan – There was one property on Google Maps, and sent city a note to see that if it meets integrity to be declared historic 4625 32nd Street, craftsman cottage. Recommended everyone review History of Normal Heights article: <https://normalheightscpg.org/history-of-normal-heights/>.

Undergrounding

Emilie – Block 3DD, NE corner is fully funded and ready to construct. Will be forming MAD. Property owners will be surveyed done by Emilie/Frances – will get the list from the city. MAD is needed if the property owners want acorn lights in addition to cobras that must be at intersections. If MAD approved, owners will have extra charge on property tax bills to pay for acorn lights.

Community garden

Paul – Submitted to CalTrans for grant for community garden on Cherokee and intersects with East Mountain View; refused by property owner. Matching funds pledged by Selby team and converging with Parks & Recs group to look back at part of Ward Canyon Park.

Traffic issues

Allan – Ramp requests for East Mountain View and Mansfield/Arthur – they are in process.

Adjournment

Paul thanked Parker for time keeper.

Paul motioned to dismiss. Unanimous.